Bissell George E -- Sermon Dr (F03) DRAWER 21A Sculptors - B

71. 2009. 085. 02743

Statues of Abraham Lincoln

George Edwin Bissell
Clermont, Iowa
1903

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

71. 2009. 025. 02743

SfN

([SCULPTORS], [SCULPTURE], [FLANNERY, LOTT], [ROGERS, RANDOLPH], [REAM, VINNIE], [BALL, THOMAS], [BISSEL, GEORGE E.], [VOLK, LEONARD W.], [MILLS, CLARK], [ST. GAUDENS, AUGUSTUS], [MASK], [TAFT, LORADO], [ILLINOIS, URBANA])
THE ENDURING LINCOLN

By: William E. Barton

Journal of Illinois State Historical Society:
Vol. 20, no. 2, July, 1927, pp. 243-254

LfN

([SCULPTURE], [ST. GAUDENS, AUGUSTUS], [FRENCH, DANIEL CHESTER], [BARNARD, GEORGE GRAY], [TAFT, LORADO], [MULLIGAN, CHARLES J.], [VOLK, LEONARD], [MEAD, LARKEN], [TORREY, FRED M.] [WEINMAN, ADOLPH], [BORGLUM, GUTZON], [BISSELL, GEORGE], [KECK, CHARLES], [MANSHIP, PAUL])
LINCOLN IN SCULPTURE

By: Nellie V. Walker

SCHOOL NEWS AND PRACTICAL EDUCATOR:
Vol. 46, No. 6, February, 1933, pp. 1-5

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http://archive.org/details/statuesofabrahamblinc

"Its name indicates its character"

THE LINCOLN NATIONAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

LINCOLN
HISTORICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION

LOUIS A. WARREN, DIRECTOR

RESEARCH BUREAU
INTERPRETS THE LIFE OF LINCOLN AS REVEALED IN AUTHORIZED PUBLIC RECORDS AND ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS.

LIBRARY BUREAU
GATHERS AND CATALOUGES ALL CLASSES OF LINCOLN LITERATURE FOR ITS REFERENCE LIBRARY.

PUBLICATION BUREAU
ISSUES A WEEKLY BULLETIN LINCOLN LORE AND PREPARES HISTORICAL DATA FOR RELEASE IN BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, MAGAZINES, AND NEWSPAPERS.

INFORMATION BUREAU
COMPILES, INDEXES, AND MAKES AVAILABLE INFORMATION, BEARING ON THE SUBJECT OF LINCOLNIANA.

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COLLECTS AND DISPLAYS IN ITS MUSEUM; MANUSCRIPTS, PORTRAITS, CURIOS, AND SOUVENIRS ASSOCIATED WITH LINCOLN.

SPEAKERS BUREAU
PROVIDES SPEAKERS FOR MEETINGS OF CIVIC CLUBS, SCHOOL GROUPS, CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS, ETC.

EDUCATIONAL BUREAU
PROMOTES ESSAY CONTESTS, ARRANGES PROGRAMS, AND STIMULATES AN INTEREST IN THE STUDY OF LINCOLN'S LIFE.

MEMORIAL BUREAU
MARKS SITES OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, AND EMPHASIZES ANNIVERSARY OCCASIONS ASSOCIATED WITH LINCOLN.

July 22, 1932

Postmaster
Clermont, Idaho

My dear Sir:

We now have ready for the press a brochure containing the portraits of 50 heroic bronze statues of Abraham Lincoln in America and are attempting to make this an exhaustive study.

Just as we are about to go to press we learn that there is a statue of Lincoln by Bissell at Clermont, Idaho.

Would it be possible for you to have one of your local photographers take a picture of this statue, if it is a full length statue of Lincoln in bronze, and give us some history as to when it was dedicated? If there is no photographer in your town, of course, you could have someone take a snapshot of it and send us the negative. That might do. We do not want to go to press without this statue.

We would be pleased to meet the expense of having the photograph taken.

Thanking you for any courtesies you may extend in this respect, we are

Sincerely yours,

Louis A. Warren Director
Lincoln Historical Research Foundation

LAW:EB

Returned.

July 21, 1942

Mr. A. Larrabee
Clermont, Iowa

Dear Mr. Larrabee:

We have been informed that you could give us some information about the Lincoln statue which is supposed to be located in your city. It is our understanding from a newspaper clipping that an Honorable William Larrabee donated the statue to the city.

Any information that you could give us together with the name of a photographer who could furnish us with a picture of the statue would be greatly appreciated.

Yours very truly,

M. A. Cook

MAC/c

FREDERIC LARRABEE
SNELL BUILDING
FORT DODGE, IOWA

2/

Clermont, July 25-1942

Mr. M. A. Cook
Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Dear Mr. Cook;

Your letter of July 21st received, and with regard to the Lincoln statue at Clermont will say;

There is a statue of Lincolnlocated in a park in the town of Clermont. The statue is of bronze and of heroic size. The statue was made by Geo. E. Bissell, and is a replica of the one he made to be placed in Edinburgh, Scotland.

On the pedestal are four panels in bronze which the sculptor made to carry out the ideas of my father. One scene is the surrender of Appomattox, one of Soldiers leaving Home, one of the Battle of Mobile showing admiral Farragut and his Lieutenant ~~AM~~ Dewey.

The inscription on the base below, "Erected in 1902 in memory of the soldiers and Sailors of the Civil War-1861-1865".

The memorial was presented to the town of Clermont by my father William Larrabee, former Governor of Iowa, and dedicated at the 8th reunion of the 12th Iowa. Vet. Vol. Infantry, June 19-1903.

I am enclosing post card snap shot of the statue. There is no photograpger in Clermont, but there is one at West Union, Ia. a town about eight miles from here, his name is ~~MX~~ E. R. Ballard, and he does good work.

Very truly,

Fred. Larrabee

Fred. Larrabee

July 27, 1942

Mr. E. R. Ballard
West Union, Iowa

Dear Mr. Ballard:

We have just been informed by Mr. Fred Larrabee, Fort Dodge, Iowa that we might be able to purchase from you a picture of the Lincoln bronze statue at Clermont, Iowa.

What we would like to have is a photograph showing as much detail of the statue as possible. This picture would be used in a display here in our Library.

The only picture which we have of the statue is a postcard #5672 but it gives very little detail.

Yours very truly,

M. A. Cook

MAC/c

September 17, 1942

Mr. E. R. Ballard
West Union, Iowa

Dear Mr. Ballard:

Almost two months ago I wrote to you asking for a photograph of the Lincoln Statue in Clermont, Iowa. To date we have had no reply.

We would like to have a picture showing as much detail as possible. The picture is to be used in a display in our Library.

What is you price for a good copy, glossy finish, 8" X 10" of this subject?

An immediate reply would be greatly appreciated.

Yours very truly,

M. A. Cook

MAC/c

October 29, 1942

Mr. Frederic Larrabee
Snell Building
Fort Dodge, Iowa

Dear Mr. Larrabee:

You will no doubt recall our earlier correspondence this year in which you suggested that I might contact Mr. E. Ballard of West Union, Iowa to secure a picture of the statue of Abraham Lincoln presented by your father to the City of Clermont.

I have written Mr. Ballard several times, but have been unable to get an answer from him. Could you suggest to us some other means of securing a good photograph of the statue for our files?

It is possible that among your father's papers he might have a good photograph of this work.

Yours very truly,

MAC:VFF
M.A.Cook

Librarian

P.S. Attached you will please find a stamped self-addressed envelope for your convenience.

M.A.C.

MISS ANNA LARRABEE
Montauk
Clermont, Iowa

November 4" 1942

Mr M.A.Cook
Fort Wayne
Indiana.

Dear Mr Cook;

Your letter to my brother Frederic Larrabee at Fort Dodge- has been given to me for attention as he is away.

I regret that Mr Ballard of West Union has not made the photographs for you of our Clermont Lincoln statue, for he does most excellent work. I shall investigate and see if I can find another man in one of the nearby villages to comply with your request. I'll also look among my Father's papers.

Very truly

Anna Larrabee

November 10, 1942

Miss Anna Larrabee
Montauk
Clermont, Iowa

Dear Miss Larrabee:

I am pleased to have your letter of November 4 and hasten to inform you that we hope that you will be successful in securing a good picture of the statue given to Clermont by your father.

We desire a good copy or picture of the statue for a display here in our library or museum in Fort Wayne and appreciate greatly your interest in our behalf.

Yours very truly,

MAC:EB
M.A.Cook Librarian

LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 824 FORT WAYNE, INDIANA January 22, 1945

THE SOLDIERS' BRONZE MEMORIAL

One of the most far-reaching projects which has found a permanent place in the broad program of the Lincoln National Life Foundation is the sponsoring of an annual Boy Scout Pilgrimage to Lincoln Shrines on Lincoln's birthday. An award is presented to each scout making the trek in the form of a card with an attendance seal and a picture of one of the heroic bronze statues of Lincoln.

These recognition certificates have attempted to present the story of Abraham Lincoln in bronze, starting with *Lincoln, the Hoosier Youth*, by Manship, and continuing on through the different stages of his life, until the series has now reached the Civil War period. This year the famous bronze statue by Bissell, at Edinburgh, Scotland, is utilized for the award, and it seems timely to present this subject just now, because of the many former scouts who are now in Europe.

The statue was erected in memory of Scottish-American soldiers who served in the Civil War, and is located on a plot of ground in the Old Calton Cemetery in Edinburgh, set apart as a burial place for the soldiers. The old burying ground is in the very heart of the city, but a few hundred feet from the general post office, however, a high wall surrounding the cemetery hides it from view. Many famous Scotsmen are buried there. Of special Lincoln interest is the grave of Willie Nicol, Robert Burns' companion and fellow-lodger. Any associate of Burns, whose work Lincoln so greatly admired, would create a congenial atmosphere for the statue.

The monument was conceived by Wallace Bruce, United States Consul at Edinburgh, and it was through his initiative and keen interest that the statue was finally completed and dedicated. It was the first heroic bronze statue of Abraham Lincoln to be erected in Europe. Plans were first made for the monument in 1890 and in 1892 Consul Bruce made his first public announcement of the project. Hon. Levi P. Morton, Civil War governor of Indiana, headed the subscription list which reached the sum of $6,300.

The statue was unveiled on August 21, 1893. Sir William Arrol was chairman of the day. Henry R. Heath, of New York, chairman of the monument committee, made a few remarks previous to the unveiling. The presentation address was made by Hon. Wallace Bruce, and it was received on behalf of the Town Council of Edinburgh by The Lord Provost James A. Russell.

Not only is the statue of military significance, but the sculptor, George E. Bissell, was also a soldier in the Civil War, and was in a position to enter into the very spirit of the undertaking. He was born in New Preston, New Jersey, on February 16, 1839, and at twenty-three years of age became a private in the 23rd Connecticut Volunteers. In 1863 he became Asst. P.M. in the United States Navy. After the war he married Marie E. Wilton. He was engaged in the marble business with his father and brother in Poughkeepsie, and later studied art in Paris, Rome, and Florence.

Many of his heroic bronze statues were of officers in the American forces during the Civil War. Col. Chatfield, Gen. Gates, Col. d'Peyster, Adm. Farragut, Gen. Sherman, and Adm. Dahlgren are a few of them. He also did a group, "The Navy," for the Colonnade Navy Arch, New York. He passed away at Mount Vernon, New York, on August 30, 1920.

Bissell's Lincoln monument in reality is an Emancipation group as there are two bronze figures associated with it, Lincoln and the freed slave. Lincoln is presented in a standing posture, holding a scroll in his right hand. The slave is half kneeling, resting partly on a trophy of battle flags placed on the surbase and stretching out an imploring arm to the Emancipator. The inscription to the right of the negro is a quotation from Lincoln:

> "To preserve the jewel of Liberty
> in the Frame work of Freedom."

The foot of the stone base contains these four words: Emancipation, Education, Union, Suffrage. The names of the soldiers commemorated also appears on one side of the monument. The monument over-all is fifteen feet high and nine feet square at the base.

It is not generally known that a replica of Bissell's Lincoln was presented to Clermont, Iowa, by William Larrabee, a former governor of the state. While the standing Lincoln is the same as the one at Edinburgh, there is no freed slave associated with the monument. Four panels in bronze, however, are set in the stone base and three of them represent these Civil War episodes: Soldiers Leaving Home, Appomattox, Battle of Mobile.

Among all the many heroic bronze statues of Lincoln it is doubtful if one might be selected more suitable for a recognition award this year than the Bissell statue, and it is hoped that each boy who receives a picture of the statue may learn something of its international significance. An orator at the dedication of the statue remarked:

"We have a happy location for this monument—the first ever erected to Lincoln in Europe—in the most beautiful city of the world. What associations! Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags. Yonder Castle, with its history of one thousand years; the Gothic monument of Sir Walter Scott; the noble Forth, tossed by storm or sleeping in sunlight; the old High Street, with its marvellous associations,—what a realm of history and romance, what a wonderful city! . . .

"Here the monument to David Hume, whose death followed closely upon the Declaration of Independence; and yonder obelisk—the People's Monument—erected to those who struggled for a wider suffrage, to Muir, Palmer, Skirving, Margarot, and Gerrald, exiled in the cause of liberty. 'It is a good cause. It shall ultimately prevail. It shall finally triumph,' said Muir. 'I know,' says Skirving, 'that what has been done these two days will be rejudged.' We celebrated today—the very centenary of that utterance—by unveiling a monument to the last great martyr in the cause of Saxon freedom—an honest man, who saved us in the hour of our peril. May it stand to all time as a memorial to your heroes who fought for their adopted home beyond the sea—as a resting-place for those who have returned, and have no shelter in the last hour, and as another bond of widening love and friendship between Great Britain and the United States of America."

Chicago Daily Tribune
Monday, February 13, 1956
Part 3—Page 1

IN THIS SECTION
Today with Women
• MOVIES
• AMUSEMENTS
• WANT ADS

IOWA LINCOLN STATUE IS SAME AS EDINBURGH'S

Bissell Work Stands in Clermont

Clermont, Iowa, Feb. 12 [Special] — A counterpart of the Lincoln statue in Edinburgh, admired yearly by thousands of American tourists, and made by the same distinguished American sculptor, George E. Bissell, stands in this northeast Iowa village of 625.

It was some 60 years ago that William Larrabee of Clermont, one time governor of Iowa, and Mrs. Larrabee saw the Edinburgh Lincoln on a visit to Scotland, and greatly admired it. The idea came to them to erect a duplicate of the statue in the home village.

They secured the services of Bissell, and in 1902 the village accepted Gov. Larrabee's gift, dedicating the first bronze statue of Lincoln in Iowa.

The Clermont statue stands in a little park with the Rock Island railroad tracks and station on one side and U. S. highway 18 on the other.

Now and then tourists stop at the park for a closer view. They look on a bronze Lincoln, showing him as a speaker, holding in his right hand the emancipation proclamation.

At the base of the statue are four bronze panels, depicting Civil war scenes, two of them of Clermont's company of volunteers, of which David B. Henderson, later speaker of the United States house of representatives, was an officer.

Its name indicates its character

The Lincoln National Life Foundation

Fort Wayne, Indiana

R. Gerald McMurtry
Director

July 19, 1963

Attention: Postmaster
Clermont, Iowa

Dear Sir:

I wonder if you can assist us with a project we started over twenty years ago and have been unable to complete?

We would like to have an 8 x 10 inch glossy print of a bronze statue of Abraham Lincoln, which is located in a park in your town of Clermont....This statue is a replica of one made by Geo. E. Bissell, which stands in Edinburgh, Scotland. The one in your park was a gift to the town of Clermont by William Larrabee, former governor of Iowa, in 1903.

In our Lincoln museum and library, which contains over 200,000 items of Lincolniana, we have a complete picture file of all Lincoln statues in existence, with the exception of the one in your town. We very much want this picture for our collection, and of course will gladly pay the expense.

Would you be so kind as to place this letter in the hands of a local photographer who would be willing to do us this favor? Perhaps your local newspaper has such a picture in their file?

Whatever help you can give us will be much appreciated. Enclosed is a stamped addressed envelope for your convenience in answering.

Sent check 15¢ & stamps on 8-20-63

Sincerely yours,

Ruth P. Higgins

rh/

Mrs. Ruth P. Higgins

Dear Mrs Higgins,
Have had photographer take photo of statue and it will be complete in a short time. She brought the proof yesterday. The cost is $5.00 plus tax + postage. I will send Photo when it is ready + you may pay me when you get photo -
Sincerely, H. Martin P.M.

AUG.16.1963

Dear Sirs-:

Some time ago some-one from your office wrote me regarding a photo of the Lincoln Statue in the Lincoln Park at Clermont Iowa.

I want to some expense and bother to comply with her wishes and had a photo taken by a professional photographer, and upon completion,wrote that it was ready, and have heard nothing from her since,and now would appreciate hearing where to send the photo.

The photo cost me $5.10. and postage would be about .15¢

Sincerely yours.

H.G.MARTIN
POSTMASTER. CLERMONT IOWA.

THIS SIDE OF CARD IS FOR ADDRESS

CLERMONT
AUG 16
5 PM
1963
IOWA

4¢
U.S. POSTAGE

LINCOLN NATIONAL LIFE INSURANCE CO.

FORT WAYNE

INDIANA.

Bissell

August 19, 1963

Mr. H. O. Martin
Postmaster
Clermont, Iowa

Dear Mr. Martin:

We are delighted that you have been able to get us the photograph of the Lincoln statue, which we recently inquired about.

I am sorry for the delay in replying, but I understood from the note you sent on the bottom of our letter that the photograph was in the mail and we should reimburse you after it arrived; therefore, I was holding the check, and my letter, until we received the picture.

Enclosed is our check for $5.10, and an additional 15¢ in stamps to cover the cost of mailing.

We really do appreciate the trouble you went to in order to help us out, and regret any inconvenience we have caused you. Please accept from us, free of charge, a subscription for Lincoln Lore, our monthly bulletin. We hope you will enjoy it. Enclosed is a sample copy.

Sincerely yours,

rh/

(Mrs.) Ruth P. Higgins

THE EMANCIPATOR

Clermont, Iowa — SCULPTOR — George E. Bissell

LINCOLN SHRINE
BOY SCOUT
PILGRIMAGE
FEBRUARY 12

ATTENDANCE
1990
AWARD

SPONSORED BY
THE LINCOLN
LIBRARY AND
MUSEUM

Lincoln in Marble and Bronze

BY F. LAURISTON BULLARD

A Publication of

THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN ASSOCIATION

Springfield, Illinois

Rutgers University Press

New Brunswick, New Jersey

(over)

monument is more than fifteen feet in height and one must stand well back to examine it. The bearded, frock-coated figure stands with the right foot advanced, a small scroll in the right hand, and the left hand behind his back. The inscription about the base gives the dates and facts of the memorial. On the front across from the Negro are chiseled the words: "To preserve the jewel of liberty in the framework of freedom. Abraham Lincoln."

George Edwin Bissell, the sculptor of this statue, had served with a Connecticut regiment in the Civil War, then for two years as a naval paymaster. Entering the marble business with his father and brother in Poughkeepsie, he manifested a talent for modeling, and in 1875 crossed the ocean to spend two years in study at Paris, Florence, and Rome. Thereafter a long series of portrait busts and statues came from his studios in Poughkeepsie and Mt. Vernon. For years he divided his time between America and Paris. His work was popular, and he was flooded with commissions. Everyone loved him as a kindly man. His protégés, of whom there were more than a few, affectionately called him "Père Bissell." Although as a rule the critics pronounce him a realist, he was not altogether lacking in idealization. The American who visits the old cemetery within the wall on the hillside is likely to feel both the drama and the beauty of the sculptor's conception of the Emancipator President, heightened as these are by the monuments surrounding the memorial and by its situation in one of the most attractive Old World cities. Wallace Bruce had written a poem for the unveiling ceremony, the reading of which he discreetly postponed on that stormy day of dedication. Its stanzas, like the two here quoted, reflect the spirit of both the poet and the sculptor:

With tendrils reaching west to rear
  The highest type of manhood's power,
Born of the soil, without a peer,
  Our Lincoln stands, the noblest flower
    Of freedom in its widening course
    From Chatham, Fox, and Wilberforce:

To whom an anxious nation turned
  When gathering clouds the sky o'ercast,
A pilot brave with soul that yearned
  To guide the ship before the blast;
    To hold the faith our fathers knew,
    To keep the stars within the blue.

In a small town in northeastern Iowa stands a replica of this "Lincoln," with the slave omitted. This was the gift of William Larrabee, an Iowa pioneer, born in Connecticut, who prospered as a businessman and agriculturist in the West and became governor of the state. Larrabee acquired bronze busts of various war leaders for his house, and provided several memorials for his home town of Clermont. He saw Bissell's "Lincoln" in Edinburgh, and arranged with the sculptor for the duplicate, which was dedicated to the soldiers and sailors of the Civil War on June 19, 1903. The pedestal carries four tablets showing war scenes executed by Bissell.

SOURCES: *The Lincoln Monument in Memory of Scottish-American Soldiers*, Edinburgh, 1893; John J. Piatt, ed., *The Hesperian Tree*, 1900.

11 ILLUSTRATED PAGE 154

An Equestrian LINCOLN

WHEN Henry Kirke Brown's "Lincoln the Emancipator" was removed from the entrance Plaza of Prospect Park, Brooklyn, in 1895, to another and better site inside the Park, the Plaza was not left without a presentment of the President. A bronze "Lincoln" in high relief is set into one of the piers of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial Arch in the Plaza, and because it is so nearly equivalent to a full statue, and is the only equestrian "Lincoln" known to us, it shall have a little space in this volume. True, it is not highly regarded as a work of art. It is so "different" as to be quaint, amusing rather than inspiring. The New York City Art Commission described it as "An equestrian high relief in bronze, / showing President Lincoln mounted on a horse / standing quietly, with its right side to the / spectator and the rein hanging loosely on / its neck. His face is toward the spectator / and his right arm is extended downward with / the hand holding a high-crowned hat, while / his left hand, idly holding the reins, / rests on the pommel of the saddle."

By way of contrast, an art critic, after an inspection of this "Lincoln" and the companion work on the opposite side of the archway in which General Grant is shown in relief, observed: "Works of art they are not. . . . O'Donovan seems to have moved in sublime ignorance of the fundamental facts of sculpture and beyond the warmth of the

See other side for sources

Bissell George E - Sermons [illegible] (1903) DRAWER 2 A Sculptors - B